

Application No.: 10/828,272

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for a vehicle comprising:

an off-vehicle information storage device in which a plurality of different sets of information to be provided to a plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses, via a telephone line, are stored;

a user information storage device;

a customizing device configured to allow each of a plurality of users to customize audio guidance specific to each of the plurality of users and store the customized audio guidance in the user information storage device in correspondence to each of the plurality of users;

an interactive voice response device having a speech recognition function and providing audio guidance, configured to identify a user among the plurality of users, obtain the customized audio guidance specific to the identified user from the user information storage device and engage in a dialogue with the user through an automatic voice response via a telephone line using the customized audio guidance obtained from the user information storage device;
~~configured to allow a user to customize audio guidance through an automatic voice response via the telephone line in order to store the customized audio guidance in the user information storage device in advance for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user;~~

an information acquisition device configured to obtain a specific set of information from the off-vehicle information storage device based upon the dialogue between the user and the interactive voice response device that uses the customized audio guidance stored in the user information storage device; and

an information transmission device configured to transmit the specific set of information obtained by the information acquisition device to at least one of the plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) An information providing apparatus for vehicle according to claim 1, wherein:

when providing audio guidance to prompt the user to specify a desired set of information, the interactive voice response device first provides audio guidance to prompt the user to specify whether or not the user wishes to receive the specific set of information.

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4. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for vehicle comprising:

an off-vehicle information storage device in which a plurality of different sets of information to be provided to a plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses, via a telephone line, are stored;

a user information storage device;

an interactive voice response device configured to engage in a dialogue with a user through an automatic voice response via a telephone line, to customize audio guidance and to store the customized audio guidance in the user information storage device for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user;

an information acquisition device configured to obtain a specific set of information from the off-vehicle information storage device based upon the dialogue between the user and the interactive voice response device; and

an information transmission device configured to transmit the specific set of information obtained by the information acquisition device to at least one of the plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses, wherein:

the interactive voice response device records information provided to the user in the past, and customizes the audio guidance by using a set of information most frequently provided to the user among different sets of information previously provided to the user, stores the customized audio guidance in the user information storage device in correspondence to the user, and engages in a dialogue with the user through an automatic voice response via a telephone line using the customized audio guidance stored in the user information storage device in correspondence to the user.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising;

a dialog contents storage device in which contents of a dialogue conducted between each of the plurality of users~~the user~~ and the interactive voice response device when providing information to each of the plurality of users~~the user~~ are stored, wherein:

the dialog contents stored in the dialogue contents storage device are indicated to each of the plurality of users~~the user~~ when customizing audio guidance.

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7. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for vehicle comprising:

an off-vehicle information storage means for storing a plurality of different sets of information to be provided to a plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses via a telephone line;

a user information storage means;

a customizing means for allowing each of a plurality of users to customize audio guidance specific to each of the plurality of users and storing the customized audio guidance in the user information storage means in correspondence to each of the plurality of users;

an interactive voice response means for having a speech recognition function, providing audio guidance, identifying a user among the plurality of users, obtaining the customized audio guidance specific to the identified user from the user information storage means and engaging in a dialogue with the user through an automatic voice response via a telephone line using the customized audio guidance obtained from the user information storage means allowing a user to customize audio guidance through an automatic voice response via the telephone line in order to store the customized audio guidance in the user information storage device in advance for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user;

an information acquisition means for obtaining a specific set of information from the off-vehicle information storage means based upon the dialogue between the user and the interactive voice response means that uses the customized audio guidance stored in the user information storage device means; and

an information transmission means for transmitting the specific set of information obtained by the information acquisition means to at least one of the plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses.

8. (Withdrawn) An information providing method for providing information to a plurality of on-vehicle apparatuses comprising:

verifying a user calling an information center, wherein the user is aboard a vehicle having the on-vehicle apparatuses;

providing an audio guidance that is edited in advance for each user via an interactive voice response apparatus installed at the information center;

determining information desired by the user based upon a dialogue between the user and the interactive voice response apparatus; and

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transmitting the determined information to at least one of the on-vehicle apparatuses.